

EVALUATION SUMMARY



Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Office of Policy and Evaluation

Professional Exchanges and Training Program

The purpose of the evaluation was to document the outcomes and impact of the Professional Exchanges and Training Program (PET) women's leadership and media training programs between 1997 and 2001 and to assess the degree to which PET has been meeting its goals of: a) creating sustainable institutional partnerships between American and Eurasian organizations; b) expanding the professional capabilities of participants so they can impart skills and apply ideas to their workplaces and volunteer organizations; d) expanding participants' networks with counterparts in their countries and/or regions; e) sharing expertise with professionals in their countries or regions; and f) developing mutual understanding and knowledge of the other's culture between U.S. trainees and U.S. trainers to generate enduring ties.

Key Findings

- **Institutional partnerships between American and Eurasian organizations**
 - One-half of the U.S. grantee organizations partnered with an in-country firm or consultant to implement the program. Of these, all (100%) reported that they are still in contact with their in-country partners.
 - Some 53.9 % of all the PET participants surveyed still maintain contact with U.S. grantees.
- **Professional capabilities and capacities**
 - 93.7% of the U.S. trainees and 89.1% of the in-country trainees felt they learned new professional skills or techniques as a result of the PET trainings.
 - Trainees reported an improvement in their ability to communicate (92.7% U.S. and 87.5% in-country, respectively), increased self-reliance (91.7% and 85.1%), and an increased willingness to take risks (89.1% and 79.8%).
 - 81.9% of U.S. trainees and 66% of in-country trainees felt that PET training strongly supported their career goals.
- **Skills and ideas gained to apply in home workplaces and volunteer organizations**
 - 87.6% of the U.S. and 76.4% of the in-country trainees reported that training had helped them become more efficient in the workplace or as community leaders. U.S. and in-country trainees used their training "a great deal" or "a lot" in their workplaces (81.4% and 62.9%) and in their volunteer activities (74% and 57%).
- **Networks and sharing of expertise**
 - 98% of U.S. and 92% of in-country trainees reported sharing their expertise--often in formal settings of more than 100 people. 84% of all trainees reported forming new professional ties with colleagues from their own country.
- **Mutual Understanding**
 - 100% of the U.S. technical staff reported increased understanding of the politics and culture of the partner countries. 64% of U.S., but only 38% of in-country trainees, broadened their knowledge of the United States.

Project Information: Aguirre International collected data for the evaluation between April and October 2003 in six countries: Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Seven hundred and sixty-three trainees participated in structured face-to-face interviews in their local language, for an overall response rate of 35.9%. The Aguirre team also conducted structured telephone interviews with 25 U.S. grant managers, 14 focus groups with trainees, and site visits with U.S. 12 grantees (representing 22 grants) and 25 local partners.

Program Information: The Office of Citizen Exchanges in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs administers the PET program. Grants are awarded to U.S. non-governmental organizations with identified foreign partners through open-grant competition. The PET program provides professional training (on a train-the-trainer model) and exchanges in a number of thematic areas, but this evaluation focused only on two: women's leadership and media training. Between 1997 and 2001, 41 grants were awarded in these two areas to 26 different organizations – 60 percent of the total PET program grants during this time period.

Contact Information: For more information regarding this evaluation, or to request a copy of the report, please contact the Office of Policy and Evaluation at (202) 619-5307, by email at pdevaluations@state.gov or by mail at State Annex 44, Room 336, 301 4th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20547. Additional program information may be found at <http://exchanges.state.gov>.

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